

Message Text

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR JOHNSON'S STATEMENT OF MARCH 8, 1974
(SALT TWO - 401)

THE FOLLOWING IS STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR
JOHNSON AT THE SALT TWO MEETING OF MARCH 8, 1974.

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOHNSON MARCH 8, 1974

MR. MINISTER:

AT OUR MEETING ON FEBRUARY 22 I SET FORTH THE UNITED STATES
POSITION THAT OUR EFFORTS TO LIMIT STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS SHOULD
FOCUS ON THOSE SYSTEMS IN WHICH BOTH SIDES HAVE CONCENTRATED
THEIR DESTRUCTIVE POWER. THESE SYSTEMS ARE THE ICBM LAUNCHERS,
SLBM LAUNCHERS, AND HEAVY BOMBERS.

IN PRESENTING THIS POSITION I EXPRESSED THE BELIEF OF THE
UNITED STATES THAT ACHIEVEMENT OF A HIGH DEGREE OF EQUIVALENCE
IN THESE THREE SYSTEMS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE WOULD HELP TO
STABILIZE THE STRATEGIC BALANCE BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.
ACCORDINGLY I ADVANCED AS A PRIMARY ELEMENT IN A PERMANENT AGREE-
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MENT THE PROPOSAL THAT OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS LIMIT THE TOTAL NUMBER

OF ICBM AND SLBM LAUNCHERS AND HEAVY BOMBERS TO A LEVEL EQUAL FOR BOTH SIDES.

A HIGH DEGREE OF EQUIVALANCE IN THESE THREE CENTRAL STRATEGIC SYSTEMS DEPENDS UPON MORE THAN EQUALITY IN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ICBM AND SLBM LAUNCHERS AND HEAVY BOMBERS PERMITTED TO EACH SIDE. THERE ALSO NEEDS TO BE A RELATIONSHIP OF SUBSTANTIAL EQUALITY IN THE AGGREGATE DESTRUCTIVE POTENTIAL OF THESE FORCES. EQUAL AGGREGATE NUMBERS WITHOUT SUBSTANTIALLY EQUAL AGGREGATE POTENTIAL IN OUR RESPECTIVE CENTRAL STRATEGIC SYSTEMS WOULD GIVE ONE SIDE AND ADVANTAGE. THAT WOULD BE A DEVIATION FROM OUR AGREED PRINCIPLE THAT NEITHER SIDE SHOULD SEEK, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, TO GAIN A UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE.

THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT IT IS IN THE INTERESTS OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES TO AGREE ON THE CONCEPT OF A HIGH DEGREE OF EQUIVALENCE IN THE CENTRAL STRATEGIC SYSTEMS OF THE TWO SIDES. TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL THE UNITED STATES SUPPORTS THREE CONCEPTS: AN EQUAL LIMIT ON THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ICBM AND SLBM LAUNCHERS AND HEAVY BOMBERS POSSESSED BY EACH SIDE; AN EQUAL LIMIT ON THE THROW-WEIGHT OF ICBMS WITH MIRVS POSSESSED BY EACH SIDE; AND A SUBSTANTIALLY EQUAL AGGREGATE POTENTIAL OF THE CENTRAL STRATEGIC SYSTEMS AS REPRESENTED BY THE THROW-WEIGHT OF ICBMS, THE THROW-WEIGHT OF SLBMS, AND AN ALLOWANCE FOR THE HEAVY BOMBER FLEETS OF THE TWO SIDES.

AS I HAVE PREVIOUSLY NOTED, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE SURVIVABILITY OF DETERRENT FORCES, ENHANCE STRATEGIC STABILITY AND REDUCE THE RISK OF NUCLEAR WAR, THE UNITED STATES HAS STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF PROMPTLY CONTROLLING MIRVS ON ICBMS. TO ACCOMPLISH THIS TASK, WE HAVE ADVANCED THE CONCEPT OF ESTABLISHING AN AGREED EQUAL AGGREGATE LIMIT ON THE THROW-WEIGHT OF ICBMS EQUIPPED WITH MIRVS. IN THIS CONNECTION, AS I HAVE SAID, PROVIDED THE SOVIET SIDE WILL AGREE TO LIMIT ICBM MIRV THROW-WEIGHT TO EQUAL AGGREGATE LEVELS, THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO CONSIDER LIMITATIONS ON SLBM MIRV THROW-WEIGHT AS WELL.

AS YOU WILL RECALL, THE WORKING OUT OF PROVISIONS FOR THE REDUCTION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS IS ALSO A TASK OF OUR NEGOTIATIONS AS AGREED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL. THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT EQUALITY CAN BE MAINTAINED AND STABILITY CAN BE ENHANCED AT LOWER LEVELS THAN THE INITIALLY AGREED AGGREGATES OF THE CENTRAL STRATEGIC SYSTEMS. IN THE CONTEXT OF A PERMANENT AGREEMENT, THE UNITED STATES SUPPORTS THE CONCEPT OF MUTUAL REDUCTIONS, PHASE OVER AN AGREED PERIOD OF TIME, CONSISTENT WITH EQUAL AGGREGATE NUMERICAL

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LIMITS. EACH SIDE WOULD UNDERTAKE THE OBLIGATION TO CARRY OUT REDUCTIONS TO LOWER AGGREGATE LEVELS WHICH WOULD ALSO BE EQUAL FOR THE TWO SIDES. THE REDUCTIONS SHOULD BE PHASE IN ACCORDANCE WITH A MUTUALLY AGREED SCHEDULE. THIS WOULD PERMIT AN ORDERLY TRANSITION TO AN AGREED LOWER LEVEL IN A MANNER THAT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO PRESERVING EQUALITY WHILE ENHANCING THE STABILITY OF THE STRATEGIC BALANCE.

IN FORMULATING THE CONCEPTS WHICH I HAVE SET FORTH OVER THE

PAST THREE WEEKS, WE HAVE HAD IN MIND THE QUESTION OF STABILITY IN THE STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT STABILITY IN TWO SENSES. OUR TWO COUNTRIES HAVE EXPRESSED THE DESIRE TO LIMIT THE ARMS COMPETITION BETWEEN US. WE THINK OF THIS KIND OF STABILITY AS MAINTENANCE OF STRATEGIC FORCE RELATIONSHIPS UNDER WHICH NEITHER SIDE PERCEIVES THE NECESSITY CONTINUOUSLY TO MATCH MAJOR NEW ARMS PROGRAMS UNDERTAKEN BY THE OTHER SIDE TO AVOID BEING PLACED AT A STRATEGIC DISADVANTAGE. IT IS MY GOVERNMENT'S VIEW THAT ONE OF THE FEATURES OF THE PAST RELATIONSHIP WHICH HAS CAUSED EACH OF US TO EXPAND STRATEGIC ARMAMENTS TO SUCH SUBSTANTIAL LEVELS AS NOW EXIST HAS BEEN UNCERTAINTY AS TO THE FUTURE POTENTIAL CAPABILITIES OF THE OTHER SIDE, PARTICULARLY AS THEY MAY AFFECT THE SURVIVABILITY AND PENETRATION CAPABILITY OF DETERRENT FORCES. WHEN THERE HAVE BEEN DOUBTS AS TO WHAT THOSE CAPABILITIES MIGHT BE, A CONSERVATIVE JUDGMENT HAS BEEN DEEMED NECESSARY. WE BELIEVE THAT AN EFFECTIVE PERMANENT AGREEMENT SHOULD REDUCE SUCH UNCERTAINTIES ON BOTH SIDES.

STABILITY IN ITS SECOND SENSE IS RELATED TO THE NEED TO MAINTAIN STABILITY IN A CRISIS SITUATION. STRATEGIC SYSTEMS WHICH HAVE, OR ARE PERCEIVED TO HAVE, A SIGNIFICANT CAPABILITY FOR EFFECTIVE ATTACK ON THE STRATEGIC DETERRENT FORCE OF THE OTHER SIDE COULD ERODE CRISIS STABILITY. THE STRATEGIC SITUATION IS STABLE IF IN A CRISIS EACH SIDE POSSESSES SUCH SECURE AND SURVIVABLE RETALIATORY FORCES THAT IT DOES NOT PERCEIVE AN INCENTIVE TO INITIATE THE USE OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS, LEST ITS OWN DETERRENT FORCES BE DESTROYED. IT IS MY GOVERNMENT'S VIEW THAT THE MEASURES AGREED BY BOTH SIDES SHOULD PROVIDE FOR A RELATIONSHIP OF STRATEGIC WEAPONS SYSTEMS WHICH WOULD REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF RESORT TO NUCLEAR WAR IN SUCH A SITUATION. WE BELIEVE THAT THE TWO SIDES WOULD FIND IT IN THEIR MUTUAL INTEREST TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD DECREASE THIS POSSIBILITY.

IN SUM, MR. MINISTER, I HAVE NOW SET FORTH ALL OF THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE CONCEPTUAL APPROACH WHICH TH
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